



Commonwealth of Virginia Child Day-Care Council



Strategic Plan 2006 - 2011



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Contact Information

For additional information or to contact the Council, please log on to the following website and click CDCC contacts or CDCC meetings.

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/cdc_council/index.html

Introduction

Child Day-Care Council Overview

The Child Day-Care Council was established by the General Assembly in 1987, and is authorized by the *Code of Virginia* to adopt regulatory standards for licensure and operation of child day-care centers in Virginia. Originally, the Council was composed of a minimum of 13 members; however, in 2002, membership was increased by the General Assembly to a minimum of twenty-eight. All members are appointed by the Governor and represent a variety of interests from around the state.

Since its inception, the Child Day-Care Council has revised, simplified and adopted several new standards for the benefit and safety of children. The standards cover a range of topics including such things as background checks for day center staff, physical plant requirements, nutrition and food services, and first aid. The standards can be reviewed in the General Assembly Legislative Information System at <http://leg1.state.va.us/000/reg/TOC22015.HTM>. Appendix B provides an overview of the regulatory process used by the Council.

Over the past three years, the Council specifically focused its attention on determining what regulatory changes would be more conducive to the welfare of Virginia's children who spend time at licensed child day centers. Through collaboration, input from diverse perspectives and evidence-based research, new child day center regulations were adopted to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in licensed child day centers. This process resulted in an additional benefit – an increase in communications between the Council and regulatory communities associated with this industry.

Child Day Centers

Child day centers are child day programs offered to (i) two or more children under the age of 13 years in a facility that is not the residence of the provider or of any of the children in care or (ii) 13 or more children at any location. A child day program is a regularly operating service arrangement for children where, during the absence of a parent or guardian, a person or organization has agreed to assume responsibility for the supervision, protection and well-being of a child under the age of 13 years for less than a 24-hour period. Examples of child day centers include child care centers, before- and after-school programs, nursery schools and certain camps. Child day centers must be licensed unless exempted under *Section 63.2-1715* of the *Code of Virginia*.

Exemptions include:

- Religious child day centers and certified preschools if certain requirements are met;
- Programs where children are free to enter and leave the premises without permission or supervision;
- Instructional programs by schools that meet certain requirements;
- Single-focused extracurricular activities sponsored by schools;
- Education and care programs by public schools regulated by the State Board of Education;
- Certain early intervention programs;
- Competitive sports leagues;
- Programs of religious instruction; and

- Certain child-minding services and programs that operate for a limited period of time or that children attend for only a limited period of time.

Licensed programs must meet the standards promulgated by the Child Day-Care Council. The Virginia Department of Social Services enforces these standards by inspecting centers at least twice a year and investigating complaints.

Strategic Plan

As part of the implementation of the plan that follows, the Council will establish a process to review progress every two years.

Vision, Mission & Values

The Child Day-Care Council envisions a future where all families in Virginia have access to licensed child day centers in which children reach their potential in a healthy, safe and enriching environment. The Council's role in achieving this vision is to protect and promote the well-being and safety of children through the adoption of regulations for licensure and operation of child day centers in Virginia.

The values that guide the Council in drafting and promulgating regulations are the following:

- **Respect**
We will show respect for the children, families, providers, and stakeholders we serve and for our fellow Council members as we work together to achieve our mission.
- **Fairness**
We will listen to the needs and concerns of stakeholders to ensure we are fair-minded in our approach.
- **Accountability**
We will hold ourselves accountable for drafting regulations that truly address the welfare of children in child day centers.
- **Clarity**
We will adopt regulations that are easy to understand.

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| <p>Vision</p> <p>A Virginia where all families have access to licensed child day centers in which children reach their potential in a healthy, safe and enriching environment.</p> | <p>Mission</p> <p>To protect and promote the well-being and safety of children through the adoption of regulations for licensure and operation of child day centers in Virginia.</p> | <p>Values</p> <p>Respect Fairness Accountability Clarity</p> |
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Stakeholders

The Council's work clearly benefits children who learn and play in licensed child day centers. However, there are several other stakeholders who are impacted by the standards the Council adopts. The complete list of the Council's stakeholders is as follows:

- Children and families
- Regulatory bodies (boards and agencies)
- Public and private partners
- General Assembly
- Providers
- Business community

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Targets & Implementation

The Child Day-Care Council has established five strategic goals to provide direction for its work over the next three to five years. Each goal has one or more objectives that further define the results the Council wishes to achieve. Strategies for accomplishing the objectives are also included, along with measures to monitor progress and specific performance targets, where applicable. The Council will establish a goal champion committee for each of the goals. The committees' responsibilities will include: updating the elements of each goal, as appropriate, implementing the strategies, collecting data for the measures and reporting progress. There will also be an evaluation committee that will take a broad look at all of the measures to determine whether appropriate progress is being made. Appendix F contains a list of committee members.

| GOAL #1: | |
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| Develop and modify regulations that protect and promote the well-being and safety of children. | |
| Objective 1.1 | <p>Use evidence-based research and information to guide decision-making.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Define the term "child care." B. Educate Council members on best practices and latest research. C. Review quality scales (e.g., STARS) used by other states. D. Review standards for building and fire safety code compliance. E. Collaborate with other agencies to align standards as appropriate. F. Ensure that information needed to review standards is acquired in a timely manner. G. Use Department of Social Services to gather and provide to the Council data from various sources. <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Council members who agree or strongly agree that evidence-based research and information was used to guide decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • % of Council members who agree or strongly agree that evidence-based research was useful in making decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • % of regulations approved/implemented that were based on research (Was research cited in development of regulations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD |

GOAL #1:

Develop and modify regulations that protect and promote the well-being and safety of children.

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| Objective 1.2 | <p>Encourage providers to respect families as the child's primary teacher.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Encourage parental involvement. B. Identify and disseminate resources that support parental involvement. C. Evaluate compliance to parental involvement standard. D. Provide education to providers. <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of members who agree or strongly agree that the Council has fulfilled this objective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD |
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GOAL #2:

Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of existing regulations.

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| Objective 2.1 | <p>Quantify the effects of current regulations.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Obtain and review data collected by the Department of Social Services (DSS). B. Track compliance with the five "new" areas of the standards. C. Prioritize the regulations needing changes during the next regulatory cycle. <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of allowable variances requested and granted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • Number of complaints found valid and sanctions by standard areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • Number of violations and those that repeat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • Number of new licenses issued since the standards went into effect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • Licensed capacity since the standards went into effect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • # of technical assistance requests received from providers and addressed by DSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD |
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GOAL #2:

Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of existing regulations.

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| Objective 2.2 | <p>Examine the effects of current regulation changes on the variety of program models and affordability of childcare.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ensure Council members consider the impact regulations. B. Gather and consider feedback from licensed provides, parents and other stakeholders regarding concerns about regulations. <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of changes at fee rates at child day centers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • # of enrolled children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD • # of day centers with national accreditation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD |
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GOAL #3:

Collaborate with the Department of Social Services to enhance training opportunities.

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| Objective 3.1 | <p>Promote a broader range of training topics and alternative training options for providers.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Assess training needs through survey of providers B. Survey future needs through end of training/conference evaluations C. Encourage agencies to post training opportunities on DSS websites D. Publicize accessibility of training through DSS website E. Develop registry of trainers by subject expertise and post of DSS website F. Meet with DSS training coordinator G. Assess the current infrastructure for teacher education related to ECE and after school programs; advocate for improvements <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed or not completed as evidenced by list of training topics and options promoted to provider • # of training topics and options available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: # of items on list is greater than the number in the previous measurement time period |
| Objective 3.2 | <p>Promote parent education and training.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Meet with DSS to assess current training opportunities for parents <p>Measures:</p> |

GOAL #3:

Collaborate with the Department of Social Services to enhance training opportunities.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed or not completed as evidenced by list of education and training promoted to parents • # of education and training opportunities for parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: # of items on list is greater than the number in the previous measurement time period |
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GOAL#4:

Increase awareness and support the development of funding opportunities to ensure that licensed operators can meet promulgated regulations.

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| Objective 4.1 | <p>When considering regulation, assess the financial impact of the regulation on the operator and advocate for funding to help the operator meet the new regulation.</p> <p>Strategies: A.</p> <p>Measures: •</p> |
| Objective 4.2 | <p>Gather data to determine and verify reasons for new regulation (including data not currently collected). This data will be reviewed and used to justify the financial impact of the new regulation.</p> <p>Strategies: A.</p> <p>Measures: •</p> |
| Objective 4.3 | <p>Suggest that DSS include funding in their annual budget to support the needs of the Day Care Council including, but not limited to, data gathering, staff resources, and effective and consistent interpretation and enforcement of regulations promulgated by the Council in the way that the Council originally intended.</p> <p>Strategies: A.</p> <p>Measures: •</p> |
| Objective 4.4 | <p>Collaborate with the Alignment Project to promote funding efforts for early childhood initiatives.</p> <p>Strategies: A.</p> |

GOAL#4:

Increase awareness and support the development of funding opportunities to ensure that licensed operators can meet promulgated regulations.

Measures:

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GOAL #5:

Improve awareness and perceptions of the Child Day-Care Council.

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| Objective 5.1 | <p>Educate the general public, providers and parents about Code mandates and regulations.</p> <p>Strategies</p> <p>A. Provide information through editorials, letters to General Assembly members and DSS mailings.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed or not completed as evidenced by list of actions taken • % of members who agree or strongly agree that the Council has fulfilled this objective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: 80% |
| Objective 5.2 | <p>Advocate for the Council's work.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <p>A. Educate the public of our existence.</p> <p>B. Develop a pro-active relationship with the General Assembly.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed or not completed as evidenced by list of actions taken • % of members who agree or strongly agree that the Council has fulfilled this objective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: 80% • # of proactive meetings with members of the General Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: TBD |
| Objective 5.3 | <p>Establish and strengthen collaborative public/private partnerships.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <p>A. Establish a system of communication with public schools (e.g., school readiness).</p> <p>B. Establish relationships with the Virginia state government's <i>Smart Beginnings</i> initiative.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed or not completed as evidenced by list of actions taken • % of members who agree or strongly agree that the Council has fulfilled this objective |

| GOAL #5: Improve awareness and perceptions of the Child Day-Care Council. | |
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| | – Target: 80% |
| Objective 5.4 | Develop creative approaches to communicate the Council's mission and work. Strategies: A. Develop proactive media relationships. B. Enhance the Council's web presence. C. Create a CDCC web page with Q&A (question and answer) and concerns/complaints links. Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web page changes: completed or not completed • % of members who agree or strongly agree that the Council has developed proactive relationships with the media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target: 80% |

Appendix A – Statutory Authority

Code of Virginia

§ 63.2-1735. Child Day-Care Council created; members; terms; duties.

The Child Day-Care Council is hereby continued. Its members shall be appointed by the Governor and serve without compensation. Notwithstanding the provisions of § [2.2-2813](#), reimbursement for travel expenses of members shall be limited to in-state travel. The members of the Council shall consist of two nonprofit child day center operators; three private for-profit child day center operators; one representative from each of the Departments of Social Services, Health, Education, Fire Programs, and Housing and Community Development; one pediatric health professional; one child development specialist; one parent consumer; one legal professional; one representative of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; one representative of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs; one representative of the Association of Christian Schools International; one representative of the American Association of Christian Schools; one representative of the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation; one representative of the National Accreditation Council for Early Childhood Professional Personnel and Programs; one representative of the International Academy for Private Education; one representative of the American Montessori Society; one representative of the International Accreditation and Certification of Childhood Educators, Programs, and Trainers; one representative of the National Accreditation Commission; one representative of the Virginia Council for Private Education; and one representative each of a child day center offering a seasonal program emphasizing outdoor activities, a private child day center offering a half-day nursery school program, and a local governing body all of which operate programs required to be licensed under this chapter. The membership of the Council shall also include such representatives of state agencies as advisory members as the Governor deems necessary. The Governor shall designate a member of the Council to serve as chairman.

The members of the Council shall be appointed for four-year terms, except appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired term.

The Council shall adopt regulations for licensure and operation of child day centers in the Commonwealth in accordance with the regulations referred to in § [63.2-1734](#).

The Council shall adopt regulations in collaboration with the Virginia Recreation and Park Society and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services for therapeutic recreation programs.

All staff and other support services required by the Council shall be provided by the Department.

(1987, c. 698, § 63.1-202.1; 1992, c. 661; 1993, cc. 730, 742; 2002, cc. 747, 847.)

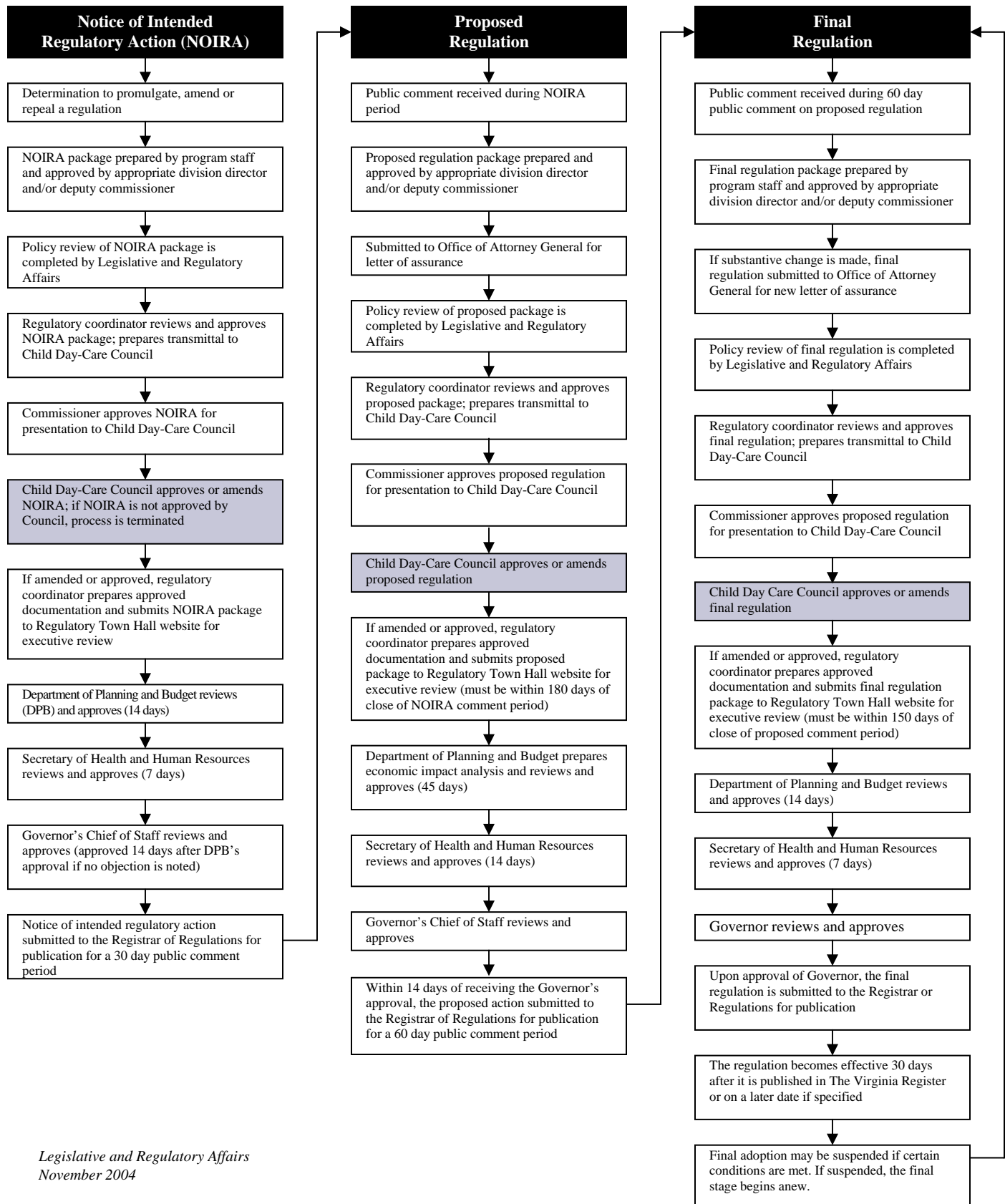
§ 63.2-1734. Regulations for child welfare agencies.

The Board, or in the case of child day centers, the Child Day-Care Council, shall adopt regulations for the activities, services and facilities to be employed by persons and agencies required to be licensed under this subtitle, which shall be designed to ensure that such activities, services and facilities are conducive to the welfare of the children under the custody or control of such persons or agencies.

Such regulations shall be developed in consultation with representatives of the affected entities and shall include, but need not be limited to, matters relating to the sex, age, and number of children and other persons to be maintained, cared for, or placed out, as the case may be, and to the buildings and premises to be used, and reasonable standards for the activities, services and facilities to be employed. Such limitations and standards shall be specified in each license and renewal thereof. Such regulations shall not require the adoption of a specific teaching approach or doctrine or require the membership, affiliation or accreditation services of any single private accreditation or certification agency.

(Code 1950, § 63-239; 1968, cc. 578, 585, § 63.1-202; 1970, c. 721; 1987, c. 698; 1993, cc. 730, 742; 1998, c. 237; 2002, cc. 298, 747.)

Appendix B – Overview of the Regulatory Process



Legislative and Regulatory Affairs
November 2004

Appendix C – Council Members

The following list reflects the membership of the Council at the time the strategic plan was being developed (May 1, 2006).

| Member | | Representing |
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| Gail Johnson, Chair | Rainbow Station, Inc. Richmond, VA | Pediatric health professional |
| William B. (Will) Harvey, Vice Chair | American Health Lawyers Association Charlottesville, VA | Legal professional |
| Rosemary Burton, Secretary | Woodbridge, VA | National Early Childhood Program Accreditation |
| Susan Ballard | Children's World Oakton, VA | Private for-profit child day center |
| Judith Beattie | Hunter Mill Country Day School Vienna, VA | Private for-profit child day center |
| Mary J. Cole | Virginia Beach, VA | Local governing bodies operating programs required to be licensed under § 63.2-1700 et seq. |
| Margaret S. Collins | Richmond, VA | National Accreditation Commission |
| Norman R. Crumpton | Richmond, VA | Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development |
| Terry Davis | Liberty Christian Preschool Mechanicsville, VA | Association of Christian Schools |
| Jay W. DeBoer | Richmond, VA | Advisory |
| Charles Williams Finley | Richmond, VA | Virginia Department of Education |
| Bethany Geldmaker, PhD | Richmond, VA | Virginia Department of Health |
| Susan C. Hackney | Virginia Beach, VA | Virginia Department of Social Services |
| Donna R. Huang | Department of Environmental Quality Richmond, VA | Advisory |
| Kim Hulcher | | International Academy for Private Education |
| Aubrey Hyde, Jr. | Virginia Department of Fire Programs Glen Allen, VA | Virginia Department of Fire Programs |
| Carol Logue | Richmond, VA | Virginia Council for Private Education |
| Donna R. Peters | | Nonprofit child day center |
| Dr. Novella Johnson Ruffin | Virginia State University Petersburg, VA | Child development specialist |
| Rose Ann Sharp | Luray, VA | Child day center offering a seasonal program emphasizing outdoor activities programs |
| Lisa Shelburne | Pennington Gap, VA | Nonprofit child day center |

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA • CHILD DAY-CARE COUNCIL

| Member | | Representing |
|--------------------|------------------------|---|
| Dr. Anita Simpkins | Charlottesville, VA | International Accreditation and Certification of Childhood Educators, Programs and Trainers |
| Nancy Read Smith | Lexington, VA | American Montessori Society |
| Kristi W. Snyder | Blacksburg, VA | National Association for the Education of Young Children |
| William J. Tobin | Falls Church, Virginia | National Accreditation Council for Early Childhood Professional Personnel and Programs |
| Jeff Walton | Fredericksburg, VA | American Association of Christian Schools |
| K. Lynn Wray | Arlington, VA | Private for-profit child day center |

Appendix D – Highlights of 2006 SWOT Analysis

Internal Council Strengths

- Member diversity
- Member commitment and dedication to children and families
- Member backgrounds and experiences
- Well-considered decisions based on personal and professional research, and respectful dialogue that values varying viewpoints and allows disagreement.
- Multiple training programs and venues
- Quality enhancement grants
- Online dashboard provides data to support regulations
- All regulations were recently addressed; good understanding of the Council's mandated task
- Good process, structure and support
- Communication with Department of Social Services, CDC/stakeholders, ourselves

Internal Council Weaknesses

- Risk of being viewed as a lobbyist group
- Confusion regarding political voice when political voice constantly requested. Responding to change in political ideologies
- Lack of response to general public, especially parents
- Lack of public awareness of our role in the childcare field.
- Enforcement angst and confusion with regard to new regulations
- Operational issues: member attendance, lack of follow-up, limited time to work on standards/fast paced/deadlines and splintered approach without attention to detail and connection to other parts of the standards.

Opportunities

- Innovation & programs, e.g., Smart Beginnings, Smart Start
- Governor and business support of early childhood education
- Education & public interest

Threats

- Politics, e.g., increased exemptions, special interest groups, opposition from a strong organized proprietary group of providers
- Lack of understanding and information in marketplace
- Lack of resources (budget and staff)
- Vision by some key decision makers and by some stakeholders that the day-care council is not an objective body of representative stakeholders
- Not all children's needs are being met
- Financial viability of industry
- Lack of educational opportunities for staffs

Appendix E – May 2003 Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

Protects and promotes the well-being of Virginia's children in licensed child-care centers

Vision

Council uses its collective expertise to adopt clear, fair, equitable and measurable regulations based on research while sustaining a close working relationship with key agencies.

Products and Services

- Standards/Regulations
- Training Consultation
- Information/Communication

Customers

- Children
- Families
- Providers
- Regulators
- Commonwealth

Values

- Well-being and Safety of Children
- Fairness
- Respect of Families
- Accountability

Strengths

- Diversity and background of members
- Commitment of members
- Excellent support staff
- Scheduled rotation of members

Weaknesses

- Responding to change in political ideologies
- Viewed as a lobbyist group
- Meetings without a clear focus

Opportunities

- Education of public
- Public interest and focus
- Supportive leaders in government
- Awareness and information through technology advances

Threats

- Process (timing – bureaucracy/politics)
- Lack of resources (budget and staff)

- Special interest, groups, legislators, etc.
- Misinformation/Lack of information

Goals and Objectives

- 1.0 Craft regulations that provide for the welfare of children.
 - 1.1 Initiate periodic reviews and Notices of Intended Regulatory Actions on center regulations that are based on research and public comments.
 - 1.2 Develop proposed and final regulations that are clear, measurable and equitable to all parties.
 - 1.3 Review regulations every three years and revise as necessary.
- 2.0 Support parents as the child's primary teacher.
 - 2.1 Provide opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning.
- 3.0 Recognize the quality of care for children.
 - 3.1 Review current research related to quality care.
 - 3.2 Articulate the Council's goals and work to relevant entities.
- 4.0 Strive for continued excellence as a regulatory entity.
 - 4.1 Periodically evaluate and refine the Council's Strategic Plan and monitor its implementation.
 - 4.2 Maintain a straight forward and easy to understand regulatory process.
 - 4.3 Utilize time efficiently and effectively.
 - 4.4 Provide Council members with on-going training and information.
- 5.0 Promote the availability of relevant, high quality and accessible training programs for child day care operators and staff.
 - 5.1 Share training information with the State Board of Social Services to assist the members with their Code required task of developing training opportunities for child day care operators and staff.
 - 5.2 Direct support staff to develop a website listing of training opportunities throughout the state.
 - List all Department of Social Services opportunities
 - Link to colleges
 - Link to associations
 - Link to all opportunities that can be found

Appendix F – Goal Champion Committee Members

The following list reflects the membership of the Council's goal champion committees as of November 9, 2006.

| Goal | Committee Members |
|--|--|
| GOAL #1: Develop and modify regulations that protect and promote the well-being and safety of children. | |
| GOAL #2: Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of existing regulations. | |
| GOAL #3: Collaborate with the Department of Social Services to enhance training opportunities. | Dr. Novella Johnson Ruffin Denise Donna Huang Terry |
| GOAL#4: Increase awareness and support the development of funding opportunities to ensure that licensed operators can meet promulgated regulations. | |
| GOAL #5: Improve awareness and perceptions of the Child Day-Care Council. | Kristi Snyder |